



## **State of Connecticut**

### **African-American Affairs Commission**

**State Capitol**

**210 Capitol Avenue – Room 509**

**Hartford, CT 06106**

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Senator Gomes, Representative Tercyak and other distinguished members of the labor committee. My name is Subira Gordon and I am the legislative analyst for the African American Affairs Commission. The mission of the African-American Affairs Commission (AAAC) is to improve and promote the economic development, education, health and political well-being of the African-American community in the State of Connecticut. The AAAC is a steering committee member of the CT Fair chance coalition.

I am writing to provide testimony for [S.B. No. 221](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE and [H.B. No. 5591](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CREATING THE CONNECTICUT RETIREMENT SECURITY PROGRAM.

The United States lags behind the rest of the developed world being the only industrialized nation that does not provide paid family medical leave. In CT African Americans are less likely to have access to paid medical leave than their white peers. SB 221 would allow those workers who are not able to access short term disability programs through their employment the ability to take up to 12 weeks off from work to take care of a new born child or deal with a family illness. Paid family medical leave is an essential program for low income workers who oftentimes have to make the choice between work and their family.

HB 5591 is essential for African Americans because only 59% take advantage of retirement programs at work in CT. This means that a large percentage will not be prepared financially for retirement. This plan takes a small percentage of an individual's paycheck to help them prepare

for their golden years without having to rely solely on social security dollars which are not enough to sustain a single person.

The AAAC fully supports both of these programs as they will help African Americans both have the ability to take care of themselves and their loved ones and prepare for retirement.

Thank you for your time

Subira Gordon

Legislative Analyst

African American Affairs Commission